



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

are rich enough in illustrative material of the highest value to make the collection and systematic classification of such material of the greatest practical interest, to say nothing of the effect which the gathering and sifting of such material, for subsequent use at a period sufficiently remote, would have upon the teachers. For these reasons the absence of direct emphasis upon the indispensable material for moral instruction afforded by every-day experience is very striking.

In all other respects the pedagogical value of the whole book is very high. Both in system and in presentation it is thoughtful, sympathetic, and practical. We find the freshness of tone and the originality of treatment that spring from personal contact with the problems of moral training and actual trial of the means proposed for their solution. The book is not a manual for class use. It will be most valuable to those teachers who seek guidance but do not care for specific directions. Its great merit lies in its suggestiveness. Those teachers who teach by *co-operation*—i.e., who work *with* the pupils in the attainment of a given insight, whether intellectual or moral—will find Dr. Adler's book stimulating and instructive in a very high degree.

PAUL H. HANUS.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

**FREEDOM AS ETHICAL POSTULATE.** By James Seth, M.A., George Munro Professor of Philosophy, Dalhousie College, Halifax, Canada. Wm. Blackwood & Sons, 1891. Pp. 48.

In this essay Mr. James Seth seeks to vindicate freedom against scientific determinism on the one hand and absolute idealism on the other. Both of these theories he holds to be the destruction of the basis of the moral life, the one "depersonalizing" the ego into nature, the other into God.

But we can hardly regard the essay as a very mature contribution to the subject with which it deals. It seems to us to begin where it should have ended, and to end where it should have begun. Instead of first investigating wherein freedom really consists, and then, from that stand-point, showing the inadequacy of other theories, the writer does the latter, by taking for granted that conception of freedom as the freedom of indifference, which in the last few pages he shows to be not the real category of moral life. Compare these two passages taken from the earlier and the later parts of the essay, the one a criticism, the other an exposition: "The absolute idealist of the Neo-Hegelian type, believing as he does in the evolution of divine reason in the universe, finds in the life of the self the manifestation or reproduction in time of the eternal self-consciousness of God. Now, such an account of the self appears to me to deprive us of freedom. If I am but the vehicle of the divine self-manifestation, if *in myself*, in my own proper selfhood or personality, I am nothing, it is illusory to talk of my freedom" (p. 21); (2) "Freedom itself, as it is generally understood, is not the ultimate or highest category of our life. . . . 'After all, free-will is not the highest freedom.' . . . Perfect freedom consists in the entire surrender of the human will to the divine, in such a surrender as does not mean the loss of human personality, but rather its perfect fulfilment and realization in the identification of man's will with the Will of God" (pp. 44, 45). These two passages are not only superficially, but really, contradictory of one another. And should Mr. Seth hold that there is no such inconsistency, since, in the

theory of absolute idealism, man is but the *vehicle* of the divine life, while in his view he can freely identify himself with that life, then we would remind him that man as a moral being—and he is nothing if not moral—cannot be the *vehicle* of anything with which he does not identify himself, and, as Kant puts it, while nature may be ruled by law, man can only be ruled by the *idea* of law. And that, we are safe in affirming, has been held by every absolute idealist worthy of the name.

It would not be fair to say that Mr. Seth is a trimmer, but it would be fair to say that he coquets with theories—such as those of Professor Fraser and Professor James—which, being apologetic towards all, are little respected by any. As Professor James says, in a passage quoted here, “Indeterminism offends only the native absolutism of my intellect,—an absolutism which, after all, perhaps deserves to be snubbed and kept in check” (p. 28). Mr. Seth, it is only fair to say, makes a valiant effort to get beyond this “half-way house,” but in his conclusion he finds rest only there: “The ultimate reconciliation of divine and human personality may well be beyond us; but I do not see how either conception can be given up” (p. 47).

All this seems to us to arise from the fact that the philosophical categories are taken as data with which we must start without examining into their nature or genesis. As a consequence they are loosely grasped; at least none of them is grasped so firmly as to be *forced* to reveal its relation to its apparent opposite. God, the world, and man are separate and independent terms, which must neither be mixed nor separated. “The ‘I’ must be something in itself, in its own proper selfhood or personality.” All, we may reply, that “I” can be “in myself,” “on my own account,” is—nothing at all; if anything, a fool in my own right. The whole problem of our moral life is not to find how much we have or are “in ourselves,” but how *little* we have and are in ourselves, and how much of ourselves there is in that other that is not another. You are as little likely to capture the secret of freedom and personality by applying the forcing-pump to exhaust what of the world and of God there is in us, as you are to capture the secret of life by putting the living being in the same circumstances. There may be a difficulty in understanding the mystery how God can be all and man yet be free, but it is a mystery in the same sense as that in which we say that the simplest things are the most mysterious. That is the basis of our life; it is the light in which alone we can see a single fact in our lives truly. The real difficulty is not to see human and divine personality together or to understand them together, but to see or understand them apart. And instead of saying that “the chief guarantee of a worthy view of God is a worthy view of man,” and that it is through the conviction of his own superiority to nature that man reaches the conception of One infinitely greater than himself (p. 47), we should naturally reverse the terms and say that it is because God is in us that any view of ourselves at all is possible. It is really by a kind of *tour de force* that in the end God, man, and the world are thrust forward into the arena together, and the lion has his mouth muzzled that he may lie down in peace by the lamb.

As a result of this it might be shown that Mr. Seth, having gone upon the basis of accepting contingency or indifference as the fundamental idea in the

conception of freedom, regards all determinations of this primitive freedom in action as *limitations* of it. The grand moral limitation is "individuality itself," and it is limited in other ways, by economy of spiritual force, by continuity of the moral life, and by fixity of character. Yet it is asked, "Is not character after all but a garment in which the spirit clothes itself, a garment which clings tightly to it, but which it need not wear eternally?" To this we can only answer, we fear there are some garments like a Nessus shirt. The ego is not something independent of a character, it is nothing save as it expresses itself in that; "in itself" it is "as good as nothing."

On other points we cannot dwell. To say that Kant's vindication of freedom "is little better than to tell a prisoner that outside his prison is freedom, and he has only to think himself outside to realize that he is free, and that Kant has succeeded only in proving that God rather than man is free" (p. 13), may be true, but can hardly be taken without proof. And absolute idealism may be true or may not be true, but it certainly does not imply that "the freedom belongs to God, and the necessity to man."

On the whole, it would seem that philosophical categories loosely held are, like nettles, apt to sting.

ROBERT A. DUFF.

NATURAL THEOLOGY. The Gifford Lectures delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1891. By Professor Sir G. G. Stokes, Bart., M.P. A. and C. Black, 1891. Pp. viii, 272.

Without form and void; we cannot otherwise describe the character and contents—or want of them—of this book. It seems unfortunate that Sir George Stokes should, of his own choice, have stepped out of that sphere of work in which he occupies a deservedly honorable position, into one which, by his own confession as well as the result's confession, he has never specially studied.

We have read this book conscientiously through for the sake of discovering the reason for its existence, and, we are sorry to add, have not found any. Had it been entitled "Table-Talk" we should have known what to expect, and could then have understood that "desultoriness and want of system" of which the author is keenly sensible. But not only is there no substance here,—that might be excused in view of the numerous engagements of which the author tells us,—there is not even an attempt at orderly and methodical treatment; and that surely every reader has a right to demand. For any one who wishes to know Sir George Stokes's opinions on the Science of Things-in-general, this volume will be a valuable one to possess. For a treatise on Natural Theology we shall require to look elsewhere.

Of one thing in these lectures we consider that we have a distinct right to complain,—the covert attempt to elude that provision in Lord Gifford's will which requires that in the discussion of these questions no appeal shall be made to any tribunal save that of reason. No less than sixteen times does the author allude to the cramping effect of this condition upon his exposition (sometimes at considerable length), and in each of these places he tells us with an apologetic word that the arguments he has just used the terms of the will do not allow him to rely upon. This naïve way of informing us of the positions he is *not* allowed to take up would be refreshing were it not so often repeated.